

Notice of Allowability

Application No.

09/874,481

Examiner

O'Connor

Applicant(s)

Boesjes

Art Unit

3627

-- The MAILING DATE of this communication appears on the cover sheet with the correspondence address--

All claims being allowable, PROSECUTION ON THE MERITS IS (OR REMAINS) CLOSED in this application. If not included herewith (or previously mailed), a Notice of Allowance (PTOL-85) or other appropriate communication will be mailed in due course. **THIS NOTICE OF ALLOWABILITY IS NOT A GRANT OF PATENT RIGHTS.** This application is subject to withdrawal from issue at the initiative of the Office or upon petition by the applicant. See 37 CFR 1.313 and MPEP 1308.

1. ☒ This communication is responsive to Appeal Brief filed February 27, 2007.
2. ☒ The allowed claim(s) is/are 23-44.
3. ☒ The drawings filed on June 4, 2001 are accepted by the Examiner.
4. ☐ Acknowledgment is made of a claim for foreign priority under 35 U.S.C. § 119(a)-(d) or (f).
 - a) ☐ All b) ☐ Some* c) ☐ None of the:
 1. ☐ Certified copies of the priority documents have been received.
 2. ☐ Certified copies of the priority documents have been received in Application No. _____.
 3. ☐ Copies of the certified copies of the priority documents have been received in this national stage application from the International Bureau (PCT Rule 17.2(a)).

* Certified copies not received: _____.

Applicant has THREE MONTHS FROM THE "MAILING DATE" of this communication to file a reply complying with the requirements noted below. Failure to timely comply will result in ABANDONMENT of this application.

THIS THREE-MONTH PERIOD IS NOT EXTENDABLE.

5. ☐ A SUBSTITUTE OATH OR DECLARATION must be submitted. Note the attached EXAMINER'S AMENDMENT or NOTICE OF INFORMAL PATENT APPLICATION (PTO-152) which gives reason(s) why the oath or declaration is deficient.
 6. ☐ CORRECTED DRAWINGS (as "replacement sheets") must be submitted.
 - (a) ☐ including changes required by the Notice of Draftsperson's Patent Drawing Review (PTO-948) attached
 - 1) ☐ hereto or 2) ☐ to Paper No./Mail Date _____.
 - (b) ☐ including changes required by the attached Examiner's Amendment / Comment or in the Office action of Paper No./Mail Date _____.
- Identifying indicia such as the application number (see 37 CFR 1.84(c)) should be written on the drawings in the front (not the back) of each sheet. Replacement sheet(s) should be labeled as such in the header according to 37 CFR 1.121(d).
7. ☐ DEPOSIT OF and/or INFORMATION about the deposit of BIOLOGICAL MATERIAL must be submitted. Note the attached Examiner's comment regarding REQUIREMENT FOR THE DEPOSIT OF BIOLOGICAL MATERIAL.

Attachment(s)

1. ☐ Notice of References Cited (PTO-892)
2. ☐ Notice of Draftsperson's Patent Drawing Review (PTO-948)
3. ☐ Information Disclosure Statements (PTO-1449 or PTO/SB/08),
Paper No./Mail Date _____
4. ☐ Examiner's Comment Regarding Requirement for Deposit
of Biological Material
5. ☐ Notice of Informal Patent Application (PTO-152)
6. ☐ Interview Summary (PTO-413),
Paper No./Mail Date _____
7. ☐ Examiner's Amendment/Comment
8. ☒ Examiner's Statement of Reasons for Allowance
9. ☐ Other _____

DETAILED ACTION

Allowable Subject Matter

1. The following is an examiner's statement of reasons for allowance:

The closest prior art, Sharp et al. (US 6,263,317), discloses a multiply-integrated method of product inventory, sales, and distribution, comprising: a programmed computer processor receiving product identifying information, pricing information, and product inventory information from multiple participating product suppliers and entering the information into a supplier database, wherein the multiple suppliers may include any of manufacturers, distributors, and retailers, and the suppliers offer products of a common category, receiving order information and storing it in a database, wherein the orders may be placed by multiple purchasers, wherein the multiple purchasers may include any of manufacturers, distributors, retailers, and retail purchasers, attempting to locate an available product for each ordered product, issuing instructions for delivery for each ordered product, updating inventory information, and creating a financial accounting record for each order.

However, the Sharp et al. reference fails to disclose, or fairly suggest, any ability for the method to include maintaining an order history by keeping a database of orders that have been fulfilled, as required by each of applicant's independent claims. Moreover, the method of Sharp et al. also fails to include that multiple entities accept orders that are then allocated among multiple suppliers and include horizontal (retailer to retailer, distributor to distributor, etc.) interactions among suppliers, as also required by each of applicant's independent claims.

2. Note that, though expressly included in the search for prior art, no foreign patents, nor any non-patent literature were identified that could reasonably be considered sufficiently relevant or pertinent so as to be characterized and addressed as "closest prior art."

3. Any comments considered necessary by applicant must be submitted no later than payment of the issue fee and, to avoid processing delays, should preferably accompany the issue fee. Such submissions should be clearly labeled "Comments on Statement of Reasons for Allowance."

4. PLEASE TAKE NOTICE, that failure by the examiner to respond to any such statement commenting on reasons for allowance does not give rise to any implication. See 37 CFR § 1.104(e).

5. Likewise, failure of applicant to comment on the examiner's statement of reasons for allowance should not be treated as acquiescence to the examiner's statement. *Salazar v. Procter & Gamble Co.*, 414 F.3d 1342, 1347, 75 USPQ2d 1369, 1373 (Fed. Cir. 2005). See MPEP § 1302.14(V).

Conclusion

6. Any inquiry concerning this communication, or earlier communications, should be directed to the examiner, **Jerry O'Connor**, whose telephone number is (571) 272-6787, and whose facsimile number is (571) 273-6787.

Official replies to this Office action may now be submitted electronically by registered users of the EFS-Web system. Information on EFS-Web tools is available on the Internet at: <http://www.uspto.gov/ebc/portal/tools.htm>. An EFS-Web Quick-Start Guide is available at: <http://www.uspto.gov/ebc/portal/efs/quick-start.pdf>.

Alternatively, official replies to this Office action may still be submitted by any *one* of fax, mail, or hand delivery. **Faxed replies should be directed to the central fax at (571) 273-8300.** Mailed replies should be addressed to "Commissioner for Patents, PO Box 1450, Alexandria, VA 22313-1450." Hand delivered replies should be delivered to the "Customer Service Window, Randolph Building, 401 Dulany Street, Alexandria, VA 22314."

GJOC

June 20, 2007

A handwritten signature in black ink, followed by the date "6/20/07" written in a similar cursive style.

Gerald J. O'Connor

Primary Examiner

Group Art Unit 3627